



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Peter McWalters
Commissioner

September 8, 2005

TO: Special Education Directors, Principals, Testing Coordinators and Teachers Who Are Participating in the 2005-06 Current Alternate Assessment Portfolio Assessment

FROM: Mary Ann Snider, Director
Office of Assessment and Accountability

SUBJECT: Training Plans for the 2005 - 2006 Rhode Island Alternate Assessment Program

*****Please Note Correction to Grades Assessed*****

As you know, two pieces of legislation, *No Child Left Behind* and *Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)*, require that all students with disabilities, even those with significant cognitive disabilities, participate in state assessment. The majority of Rhode Island students with disabilities participate in our statewide assessment system, with or without accommodations. The Rhode Island Alternate Assessment, a portfolio-based system that documents student performance on state standards across the school year, has been developed for those students with moderate, severe or profound disabilities who are unable to participate in the general assessment. A list of criteria for Rhode Island's Alternate Assessment is enclosed. Students must meet all eight criteria to participate in the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment. This year the Alternate Assessment takes place in **grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10** and includes the content areas of English language arts and mathematics. In addition, a small number of students and teachers in these same grades have been selected to participate in a yearlong pilot Alternate Assessment. Every student who qualifies for the Rhode Island Alternate Assessment must participate in either the current (ongoing) Alternate Assessment or in the pilot assessment design.

This memorandum is to provide you with information about the current Alternate Assessment workshops for the 2005-2006 school year. These workshops are designed for teachers of Alternate Assessment students and provide them with the practical details needed for their students' portfolio assessments. Every teacher with eligible students is strongly encouraged to attend the trainings. Each participant will receive an updated manual that is designed to make portfolio entries easier to complete. Experience from previous years of Alternate Assessment scoring demonstrates that portfolios with up-to-date forms tend to score higher than those without these forms.

Teachers whose students previously participated in the Alternate Assessment are asked to sign up for one of two half-day sessions. A full-day session has been planned for teachers who are new to Alternate Assessment. In addition to this September meeting, there will be two more half-days of training throughout the school year. These follow-up trainings are tentatively scheduled for December 1st and 2nd and February 15th and 16th.

Workshop information is included at the end of this letter. Like last year, teachers must register electronically for a session. Details are included in this mailing. Please make every effort to register all teachers, not participating in the pilot Alternate Assessment program, who teach students eligible for

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the Alternate Assessment. Teachers participating in the pilot will receive professional development information in a separate mailing.

For questions or more information about Alternate Assessment, please contact Cynthia Corbridge, Office of Assessment and Accountability, by email at cynthia.corbridge@ride.ri.gov or by telephone, 401-222-8497.

Dates and Locations for September 2005 Workshops

Please note that ALL 2005-06 Operational Alternate Assessment Trainings will be held at the CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL.

Full-day workshop for teachers who are participating in the Alternate Assessment **for the first time**: registration needed no later than September 9th

- Tuesday, September 20, 2005 - Crowne Plaza Hotel at the Crossings, 801 Greenwich Ave., Warwick
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Lunch will be provided.

Half-day workshops for teachers who have **previously participated** in the Alternate Assessment: registration needed no later than September 12th

- Wednesday, September 21, 2005 – Crowne Plaza Hotel at the Crossings, 801 Greenwich Ave., Warwick
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

OR

- Thursday, September 22, 2005 – Crowne Plaza Hotel at the Crossings, 801 Greenwich Ave., Warwick
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

cc: Sue Dell, Paul V. Sherlock Center, Rhode Island College
Amy Grattan, Paul V. Sherlock Center, Rhode Island College
Patricia DeToro, Measured Progress

Enclosures (2) Criteria and Electronic Registration